

# The IDVA Update



Mitch Daniels - Governor  
Tom Applegate - Director

April 2010

The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs Newsletter

Edition 2010-2

## Statement from VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki



March 21, 2010

For Immediate Release

WASHINGTON - As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, I accepted the solemn responsibility to uphold our sacred trust with our nation's Veterans. Fears that Veterans health care and TRI-

CARE will be undermined by the health reform legislation are unfounded. I am confident that the legislation being voted on today will provide the protections afforded our nation's Veterans and the health care they have earned through their service. The President and I stand firm in our commitment to those who serve and have served in our armed forces. We pledge to continue to provide the men and women in uniform and our Veterans the high quality health care they have earned.

President Obama has strongly supported Veterans and their needs, specifically health care needs, on every major issue for these past 14 months – advance appropriations, new GI Bill implementation, new Agent Orange presumptions for three additional diseases, new Gulf War Illness presumptions for nine additional diseases, and a 16% budget increase in 2010 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, that is the largest in over 30 years, and which has been followed by a 2011 VA budget request that increases that record budget by an additional 7.6%.

To give our Veterans further assurance that health reform legislation will not affect their health care systems, the Chairmen of five House committees, including Veterans Affairs Chairman Bob Filner and Armed Services Chairman Ike Skelton, have just issued a joint letter reaffirming that the health reform legislation as written would protect those receiving care through all TRICARE and Department of Veterans Affairs programs.



# State Approving Agency Update

One of the most frequently asked questions the State Approving Agency (SAA) fields from the Veteran Community is about the transferability of educational benefits

Did you know that transferring of benefit decisions comes from the Department of Defense (DoD) and not Federal VA?

While the Post-9/11 GI Bill offers a very generous post-service education benefit, a special provision of the program allows career service members the opportunity to share their education benefits with immediate family members.

Allowing career service members to transfer their GI Bill benefits to family members has long been one of the most requested items among military family readiness and advocacy groups.

DoD has established the policies and procedures for this important new program. These policies and procedures are described below.

## Application for Transferability

Applications for transferability started on June 29, 2009. However, the effective date of any transfer will be no earlier than August 1, 2009, regardless of application date. All applications must be submitted through the Transferability of Educational Benefits (TEB) website, located at:

<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>

Service members will be able to securely access this site with a Common Access Card, a DoD Self Service User ID, or a DFAS PIN. Currently this application may be accessed only with Internet Explorer.

## Eligibility

Any member of the Armed Forces (Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard, officer or enlisted) on or after August 1, 2009, who is eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and

- Has at least 6 years of service in the Armed Forces on the date of election and agrees to serve 4 additional years in the Armed Forces from the date of election.
- Has at least 10 years of service in the Armed Forces (active duty and/or selected reserve) on the date of election, is precluded by either standard policy (service or DoD) or statute from committing to 4 additional years, and agrees to serve for the maximum amount of time allowed by such policy or statute, or
- Is or becomes retirement eligible during the period from August 1, 2009, through August 1, 2013. A service member is considered to be retirement eligible if he or she has completed 20 years of active duty or 20 qualifying years of reserve service.
- For those individuals eligible for retirement on August 1, 2009, no additional service is required.
- For those individuals who have an approved retirement date after August 1, 2009, and before July 1, 2010, no additional service is required.
- For those individuals eligible for retirement after August 1, 2009, and before August 1, 2010, 1 year of additional service after approval of transfer is required.
- For those individuals eligible for retirement on or after August 1, 2010, and before August 1, 2011, 2 years of additional service after approval of transfer are required.
- For those individuals eligible for retirement on or after August 1, 2011, and before August 1, 2012, 3 years of additional service after approval of transfer required.

## Submitting a Request to Transfer Benefits

Once a veteran makes the decision to transfer benefits, they will have to complete the following steps:

1. Using your CAC card or DFAS pin, log on to the DoD Transferability of Education Benefits (TEB)

2. Web page located at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>
3. The family members eligible for benefits under DEERS will be shown. (If a dependent's name is grayed out or the edit button does not work, it means the member is not eligible for DEERS benefits and thus is not eligible to receive transferred benefits.)
4. Click the edit button for each family member you want to transfer benefits to. Choose the start date and end date, and number of months of benefit. (Spouses can use for 15 years after the member separates/retires; children can use until their 26<sup>th</sup> birthday)
5. Once you've added your family members, check all the boxes to indicate you've read and understand each statement on the transfer request page.
6. After you have submitted your request to transfer benefits; in the upper left corner of the TEB site, you will see your name, status submitted, and the date of status will be blank.
7. To track the status of your request, you will have to return to the TEB page and monitor the status.
8. After a request is approved, the status of your request will change to 'approved' and the date of status (approval) will be the date you **submitted** your request. The TEB site will automatically transfer the data to the VA, so they can process a family member's request for a certificate of eligibility.
9. Once your request is approved, your family member has to submit a request for a certificate of eligibility to the VA. They should use VA Form 22-1990e, and can do so via the VA Website:  
<http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>
10. After receiving the certificate of eligibility from the VA, family members will provide the certificate to the school.
11. If your family member has *not* received the certificate of eligibility from VA when he/she

enrolls in school, he/she should ask the veterans' certifying official at the school to submit an enrollment certification for the academic term to the VA.

12. Tuition funds will be sent direct from the VA to the school. Children using transferred benefits will receive the monthly living stipend and the books and supplies stipend. Spouses using transferred benefits will only receive the monthly living stipend and the books and supplies stipend if they use the benefits after you separate from active duty.

### **Eligible Family Members**

An individual approved to transfer an entitlement of educational assistance under the Post 9/11 GI Bill may transfer the individual's entitlement to:

- The individual's spouse.
- One or more of the individual's children.
- Any combination of spouse and child
- A family member must be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS) and be eligible for benefits, at the time of transfer to receive transferred educational benefits.
- A child's subsequent marriage will not affect his or her eligibility to receive the educational benefit; however, after an individual has designated a child as a transferee under this section, the individual retains the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.
- A subsequent divorce will not affect the transferee's eligibility to receive educational benefits; however, after an individual has designated a spouse as a transferee under this section, the eligible individual retains the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.

### **Nature of Transfer**

An eligible Service member may transfer up to the total months of unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, or the entire 36 months if the member has used none.

Family member use of transferred educational benefits is subject to the following:

- Spouse:
- May start to use the benefit immediately.
- May use the benefit while the member remains in the Armed Forces or after separation from active duty.
- Is not eligible for the monthly stipend or books and supplies stipend while the member is serving on active duty.
- Can use the benefit for up to 15 years after the service member's last separation from active duty.
- Child:
- May start to use the benefit only after the individual making the transfer has completed at least 10 years of service in the Armed Forces.
- May use the benefit while the eligible individual remains in the Armed Forces or after separation from active duty.
- May not use the benefit until he/she has attained a secondary school diploma (or equivalency certificate), or reached 18 years of age.
- Is entitled to the monthly stipend as well as the books and supplies stipend even though the eligible individual is on active duty.
- Is not subject to the 15-year delimiting date, but may not use the benefit after reaching 26 years of age.

### **Additional Information**

### **POST-9/11 GI BILL SERVICE SPECIFIC TRANSFER OF ENTITLEMENT (TEB) CONTACTS:**

Defense Manpower Data Center -  
1-800-538-9592

Active Duty AF -  
TEB - 1-800-525-0102 or 210-565-5000

Air National Guard -  
TEB- [kam.spottiswood@ang.af.mil](mailto:kam.spottiswood@ang.af.mil)  
or 1-703-607-0794

Active Duty Army -  
TEB - [G1post911gibill@conus.army.mil](mailto:G1post911gibill@conus.army.mil)

Active Duty Navy - TEB - 1-866-827-5672

Active Marine Corp/Reserve -  
TEB - [Catherine.gailey.ctr@usmc.mil](mailto:Catherine.gailey.ctr@usmc.mil)

Army Reserve -  
TEB - [mgib.support@conus.army.mil](mailto:mgib.support@conus.army.mil)

Army National Guard -  
TEB - [gibill@pec.ngb.army.mil](mailto:gibill@pec.ngb.army.mil)

Coast Guard -  
TEB - [frank.a.marcheski@uscg.mil](mailto:frank.a.marcheski@uscg.mil)

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## **VA May Withhold Additional Funds Until Advance Repaid**

Q: I attended [Ball University] during the fall term and never received my Chapter 33 [Post 9/11 G.I. Bill] Veterans educational payment, so I decided to take the advance payment of \$3,000 offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist with my college expenses. Can you tell me when VA will ask for repayment?

A: Although the VA has not given direction on how it will recoup the funds, traditionally the procedure has been to not release additional money to you until the advance has been accounted for. If you received advance pay, be aware that your monthly allowance may not come to you until the entire \$3,000 has been repaid.

*(From The American Legion magazine dated April 2010, Rapid Fire section)*

## Decision Makes It Easier for Gulf War Veterans to Receive Benefits

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki today announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is taking steps to make it easier for Veterans to obtain disability compensation for certain diseases associated with service in the Persian Gulf War or Afghanistan. This will be the beginning of historic change for how VA considers Gulf War Veterans' illnesses.

Following recommendations made by VA's Gulf War Veterans Illnesses Task Force, VA is publishing a proposed regulation in the *Federal Register* that will establish new presumptions of service connection for nine specific infectious diseases associated with military service in Southwest Asia during the Persian Gulf War, or in Afghanistan on or after September 19, 2001.

"We recognize the frustrations that many Gulf War and Afghanistan Veterans and their families experience on a daily basis as they look for answers to health questions, and seek benefits from VA," said Secretary Shinseki.

The proposed rule includes information about the long-term health effects potentially associated with the nine diseases: Brucellosis, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Coxiella burnetii* (Q fever), malaria, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, Nontyphoid *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, Visceral leishmaniasis and West Nile virus.

For non-presumptive conditions, a Veteran is required to provide medical evidence that can be used to establish an actual connection between military service in Southwest Asia or in Afghanistan, and a specific disease.

With the proposed rule, a Veteran will only have to show service in Southwest Asia or Afghanistan, and a current diagnosis of one of the nine diseases. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted over the next 60 days. A final regulation will be published after consideration of all comments received.

The decision was made after reviewing the 2006 report of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), titled, "Gulf War and Health Volume 5: Infectious Diseases." The 2006 report differed from the four prior reports by looking at the long-term health effects of certain diseases determined to be pertinent to Gulf War Veterans.

The 1998 Persian Gulf War Veterans Act requires the Secretary to review NAS reports that study scientific information and possible associations between illnesses and exposure to toxic agents by Veterans who served in the Persian Gulf War.

Because the Persian Gulf War has not officially been declared ended, Veterans serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom are eligible for VA's new presumptions. Secretary Shinseki decided to include Afghanistan Veterans in these presumptions because NAS found that the nine diseases are prevalent in that country.

Noting that today's proposed regulation reflects a significant determination of a positive association between service in the Persian Gulf War and certain diseases, Secretary Shinseki added, "By setting up scientifically-based presumptive service connection, we give these deserving Veterans a simple way to get the benefits they have earned in service to our country."

Last year, VA received more than one million claims for disability compensation and pension. VA provides compensation and pension benefits to over 3.8 million Veterans and beneficiaries. Presently, the basic monthly rate of compensation ranges from \$123 to \$2,673 to Veterans without any dependents.

Disability compensation is a non-taxable, monthly monetary benefit paid to Veterans who are disabled as a result of an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service.

For more information about health problems associated with military service during operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and related VA programs go to [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/) or go to [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) for information about disability compensation.



# **The Indiana Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom Memorial Wall**

**Indiana has sustained the following  
casualties since the last Update**



U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant Jeremy McQueary, 27, Columbus, Indiana.

Died February 18, 2010 in Afghanistan in Helmand province, from wounds suffered by an improvised explosive device.

McQueary was assigned to 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Camp Lejeune, N.C. He joined the Marines in 2002. In addition to this tour, where he was a motor sergeant, he also had tours in Iraq in 2005 and 2008.



U.S. Marine Corps Lance Corporal Joshua H. Birchfield, 24, Westville, Indiana.

Died February 19, 2010 while supporting combat operations in the Farah province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, Calif.

Birchfield was a 2004 Westville High School graduate.



U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Gregory Scott Stultz, 22, Brazil, Indiana.

Died February 19, 2010 while supporting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Okinawa, Japan.

He grew up in Clay County and attended Northview High School, graduating in 2006.

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## **KAHLO Jeep to Donate to MFRF**

KAHLO Jeep has informed IDVA that, during the month of April and May, they will donate \$100 from the sale of every vehicle they sell to the Military Family Relief Fund. A spokesperson told us KAHLO Jeep wants to give back to the Hoosier veterans who are sacrificing so much. They did the research and chose the MFRF.

IDVA wants to thank KAHLO Jeep for their patriotism and generosity.



## Recently Enacted Legislation and other matters

**Indiana Code 34-55-10-2 (c)(12)** pertaining to Attachments is amended effective 1 July 2010 to conform to the following: A disability benefit awarded to a veteran for a service connected disability under 38 U.S.C. 1101 et seq. is exempt from attachment from a judicial lien, process, or proceeding to collect a debt. This subdivision does not apply to a service connected disability benefit that is subject to child and spousal support enforcement under 42 U.S.C. 659(h)(1)(A)(ii)(V).

**Indiana Code 9-18-18-1, IC 9-18.18-2** pertaining to the Disabled Hoosier Veteran license plate has been amended to allow for the following:

A person may apply for, receive, and display a disabled Hoosier veteran license plate on the person's vehicle for private and personal use if the person, as the result of having served in the armed forces of the United States, has:

(1) lost sight in both eyes or suffered permanent impairment of vision in both eyes to the extent of being eligible for service-connected compensation for the loss;

(2) suffered the loss of one (1) or both feet or the permanent loss of use of one (1) or both feet;

(3) suffered the loss of one (1) or both hands or the permanent loss of use of one (1) or both hands, or

(4) a United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability rating for a physical condition that precludes the person from walking without pain or difficulty; or

(5) been rated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as being one hundred percent (100%) disabled and is receiving service related compensation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Applications must be accompanied by a copy of the VA Rating Determination.** Older DAV plates

that only say DAV and do not have the universal handicap symbol are only valid in Indiana for parking purposes. Plates which do not have the universal handicap symbol may be exchanged free of charge at their local BMV. Applications may be obtained from either the BMV or the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs. The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs must verify the veteran's eligibility.

**Indiana Code 10-17-9** pertaining to the Indiana Veterans' Home has been amended to allow for the following:

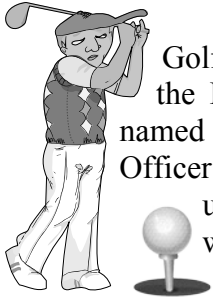
The Indiana Veterans Home in West Lafayette provides nursing and domiciliary care for any Hoosier Veteran **who was honorably discharged from the armed forces. To qualify you must have been a resident of Indiana for at least one (1) year immediately preceding the application. The Home is open to both veterans and their spouses. Veterans who have not lived in Indiana during the preceding year are eligible if they joined the service from Indiana.** Veterans who are Medicaid-eligible will be required to apply for that benefit. For more information write to the Home at: Indiana Veterans Home, 3851 N. River Rd., West Lafayette, IN. 47906-3762 or call (765) 463-1502.

### **Indiana Remission of Fees applications.**

Not covered by legislation, but something which will affect applicants for the Indiana Remission of Fees (CDV) benefit is as follows:

Effective with the 2010-2011 applications, applicants must include a copy of their birth certificate or legal adoption papers with the application, State Form 20234 in order to prove relationship to the veteran. Applications received without the required documentation will be returned to the student.

# **IDVA Annual Golf Outing and Conference**



7 June 2010 – Jon Brinkley Memorial Golf Outing. Conducted every year prior to the IDVA Conference, this golf outing is named in honor of long-time State Service Officer Jon Brinkley who passed away in January of 2009. Details and applications will be sent out shortly by Ray Baker, the SAA organizer of the event.

8-9 June 2010 – IDVA Conference – Marriott East, Indianapolis. This conference will be the first using the new 2-day format and promises to be a fast-paced, informative conference.

Tests will be mailed to participants after the conference and the answer sheets can be mailed, e-mailed or faxed back for grading. There will also be provisions for the test to be taken online for those who wish to do so.

Attendants will be given a Certificate of Attendance on Wednesday after classes and then released. Tests will be graded later and the results sent to the CVSO along with a Certificate of Completion.

Noelle Wikert will be corresponding with you shortly with registration information, but reservations at the motel must be made by each CVSO on an individual basis.

Following is the agenda, reservation and additional information.

## **IDVA Annual Conference**

8-9 June 2010

Marriott Inn – East

7202 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street

Indianapolis, IN 46219

Toll-free number for reservations is 1-800-228-9290

## **D-R-A-F-T**

**Tuesday, 8 June 2010**

8:30a.m. – Noon - Registration in Atrium

**12:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. - General Session IDVA Conference**

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. – Introductions -  
Director's Update –  
Tom Applegate

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. – IDVA/SAA/IVMC/IVH  
Update - Tom, Ron, Noelle,  
Alan,

1:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. – Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. – VA Regional Office Up-  
dates – Mike Stephens &  
Staff

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. – Claims for Pension at the  
A&A Rate – VA  
facilitator(s) to be an-  
nounced

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. – Break

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. – Suicide Awareness &  
Prevention – Travis  
Field/Kimble Richardson,  
Roudebush VAMC

4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. – VAMC Assistance Policy –  
Tim Maley, VAMC

4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Veterans' Monuments &  
Memorials – BG Stewart  
Goodwin

4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. – Indiana Veterans' Service  
Officers' Association  
Meeting

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. – CVSO Reception



Wednesday, 9 June 2010

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – New Service Officer Training by The American Legion– All new service officers hired by the county since June of 2009, and other interested individuals

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – CVSO Training by Veterans' Service Organizations

12:00 p.m. Dismissal

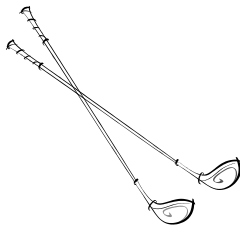
Tests will be mailed or may be taken online.

**NOTES:**

Attendees to the Conference will register/sign-in the morning of the Conference and will only need to stay one night (Tuesday), or commute.

Registration fee of \$50.00 per conference attendee (reimbursed by the county). The cost of the CVSO Reception is included in the registration fee.

The Indiana Veterans' Service Officers' Association has agreed to provide the coffee and soft drinks during the training.



## **It's Official, Marion County Will Finally Be Getting their First County Veteran Service Officer!**

Back in the Spring 2009 edition of the IDVA Update we reported that Mayor Ballard's office was considering appointing Marion County's first CVSO. It's official! Mayor Ballard's Office has announced that this will finally become a reality!

Resumes will now be accepted for the position. Greg Wilson, Director of Minority and Women's Business Development reports that they expect to hire someone by the end of April.

Persons interested in the position should submit their resume to:

Office of the Mayor attention Greg Wilson,

Office of the Mayor  
Attention Greg Wilson,  
Director Minority and Women's  
Business Development  
200 E. Washington St.  
City-County Bldg.; Ste 1501  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

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### **Adjutant General to Conduct Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors of Fallen Hoosier Military Members**

Major General R. Martin Umbarger, Adjutant General for the Indiana National Guard, has ask for IDVA's assistance in an upcoming event.

The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is a program designed to help the families and loved ones who are left behind after the death of a military member to better cope with the loss.

Each event provides an opportunity to join together with survivors for a powerful time of support, care and hope! The conferences provide survivors with a wealth of information, resources and personal contact with fellow survivors in a spirit of friendship and understanding. Workshops are designed to help survivors heal and cope with life after loss and allow them to honor their loved ones as they connect with others to find hope and healing.

This event will take place in July. Details to follow.

## **eKnowledge donates \$200 SAT and ACT Test Prep Programs to Military Service Members, Veterans, Guard, Reserve, Retirees and their extended families.**

In alliance with the Department of Defense, eKnowledge is donating SAT and ACT test prep programs valued at \$200, to Military Service Members, veterans, retirees, members of the National Guard and Reserves and their extended families. The eKnowledge Sponsorship Alliance is supported by patriotic professional athletes from the NFL and MLB.

Now in its fifth year, the eKnowledge Sponsorship Alliance has donated more than 132,000 PowerPrep™ Programs with a value of \$30 million. This gift represents one of the largest private donations to military families in U.S. history. In response to the donation, eKnowledge has received over 50,000 thank-you letters from grateful recipients who have benefited from the test preparation programs.

- My son used the PowerPrep Program and increased over 300 points on his SATs and received an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. My daughter will now be able to benefit in the same way my son has, Thank You!! M. Grosso
- The PowerPrep enabled my grandson to raise his SAT score so much that he qualified for an appointment to the Naval Academy for the Class of 2011...we are hoping it will help his sister (my granddaughter). H. McAnney CWO
- I am very grateful to eknowledge and the NFL for always having the interests of our active duty military at hearts. I cannot say thanks enough for such a great program and kindness of all. Going on my 24th year of service to our country it always overwhelms me when the community opens their hearts to all military active duty and retired. It makes us prouder not just because we are serving a country we love; but, to all the patriots out there who support what we do. R. Rosado

The PowerPrep™ software includes more than 11 hours of video instruction and 3,000 files of supplemental test prep material, thousands of interactive diagnostic tools, sample questions, practice tests and graphic teaching illustrations.

### **SAT Test Dates:**

May 1, 2010      Late Registration Closes 4/8

June 5, 2010      Registration Deadline 4/29, Late  
Registration Closes 5/13

### **ACT Test Dates:**

June 12, 2010      Registration Deadline 5/7, Late  
Registration 5/8 - 21

Persons interested in obtaining a FREE \$200 SAT or ACT PowerPrep™ Program may **order online**

[www.eknowledge.com/usa](http://www.eknowledge.com/usa)

**Enter Sponsorship Code: Code: FDCE12527** or by telephone, 951-256-4076. There is no further obligation required.

*There is a small fee of \$13.84 (per standard program) which enables eKnowledge to provide technical and customer support, registration, licensure, processing, handling and worldwide shipping. This nominal fee allows the sponsorship alliance to continue helping tens-of-thousands of military families each year, which enables eKnowledge to provide technical and customer support, registration, licensure, processing, handling and worldwide shipping. This nominal fee allows the sponsorship alliance to continue helping tens-of-thousands of military families each year.*

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## **Dental Program for Retirees**

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program is available around the world to retired service members who receive retirement pay, "gray area" retired National Guard and Reserve members who are entitled to but not yet receiving retirement pay and Medal of Honor recipients. Spouses and children up to 21 years old, or 23 years old if they are full-time students, of these retirees are also eligible for the retiree dental program. Participants in this voluntary plan may get dental care from any licensed dentist within the program's designated service area. Eligible members may enroll in the TRICARE retiree dental program online, by telephone or by mail. Visit the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program website at (<http://www.trdp.org/>) and click "Prospective Enrollees" for more information on rates and benefits.



## Director's Comments

### Veterans Affairs Commission

The biggest news at IDVA has to do with the Veterans Affairs Commission a.k.a. the IDVA Commissioners. Effective 30 June the Veterans Affairs Commission and the Military & Veterans' Benefits Board as we know them will cease to exist. Effective 1 July the NEW Veterans Affairs Commission will begin and will consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Governor instead of the previous four (4) members. The duties of the new Commission will be the same as the old Commission, with the addition of the oversight of the Military Family Relief Fund and the Veterans' Affairs Trust Fund.

The present four IDVA Commissioners (Joe Carroll, Cal Cree, Dave Havely and Jim Koutz) will be on the new Commission. The Chairman of the Military & Veterans' Board (Steve Wise) and the other two members (Mike Colby and Perry Collins) will make up the remaining seven members.

So, as of 1 July, there will be seven (7) IDVA Commissioners.

### IDVA Brochure

The newest IDVA Benefits Brochure will incorporate several changes. We've listened to your suggestions and the front cover of the brochure will have the year prominently displayed, as well as the revision date. Both right on the front cover so you'll know you have the latest version in your hand. This will accomplish something else besides that: this edition and future covers of the brochure will be printed on white card stock, since the year and revision date will be right on the cover.

Additionally, we have added an index, so you won't have to search through the entire brochure to find what you're looking for. We will also continue the practice of identifying for you the information which

has changed since the last revision. This will be identified by asterisks (\*\*\*) next to the heading, and the information which has changed will be in **bold** type.

### Legislation

Of major impact from the latest legislative session is the DAV license plate. Effective 1 July, this plate has been renamed the **Disabled Hoosier Veteran** license plate and there will only be one plate, gold in color, with blue letters, so there will no longer be a DAV I and DAV II plate. Another change will be that any veteran who is rated by the federal VA as being 100% service-connected disabled will be eligible for the plate, regardless of the disability. The change which affects the CVSO the most, and the one with which we will need the most help from you to inform the veteran, is that the applicant will be required to provide the written VA Decision (the breakdown page) with the application. Applications received without the VA Rating Decision will most likely be returned without action.

For other items of legislative impact, see the article **New Legislation**.

### IDVA Conference

The IDVA Conference, to be held at the Marriott Inn – East, Indianapolis, will be on June 8 and 9. See the article **IDVA Annual Conference** for details. The noticeable change is in the fact that the conference is only two (2) days long, Tuesday and Wednesday. Additionally, we will be short-staffed this year. State Service Officer Kris Bertrand and Assistant State Service Officer Ashley Roberts will both be attending accreditation training with the National Association of County Veterans' Service Officers (NACVSO) over the same time period, thus cannot be at the conference.

The other difference is that you will not be taking the test on the last day of the conference. Instead, you will either be mailed the test, which you will mail back to us, or you will be able to take the test online after you return to your county. So, after the last class on Wednesday morning, you'll pick up your Certificate of Attendance and be able to leave. You'll be mailed the Certificate of Completion after we grade your written or online test and we will send the test results with the certificate.

See you at the IDVA Annual Conference.

**Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs  
302 W. Washington Street E-120  
Indianapolis, IN 46204**